



Dispensing Medications:

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' Legal Guidelines

Classification of drugs

The main categories of authorised veterinary medicines, and who can prescribe them, are:

- Prescription-only Medicine – Veterinarian; abbreviated to POM-V;
- Prescription-only Medicine – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, Suitably Qualified Person (SQP); abbreviated to POM-VPS;
- Non-Food Animal – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, Suitably Qualified Person; abbreviated to NFA-VPS; and,
- Authorised Veterinary Medicine – General Sales List; abbreviated to AVM-GSL.

An RQP is a Registered Qualified Person. In the case of a veterinary surgery, this can be a Veterinary Surgeon or an SQP.

- **Our vets** can prescribe and dispense **all** classifications of drugs to 'animals under their care'.
- **Our SQPs** can prescribe and dispense the classifications of drugs identified above, to clients who are registered with the Surgery who they have established are competent. A clinical assessment of the animal is not necessary.

What constitutes 'under our care'?

- a) The veterinary surgeon must have been given the responsibility for the health of the animal or herd by the owner or the owner's agent
- b) That responsibility must be real and not nominal
- c) The animal or herd must have been seen immediately before prescription or,
- d) Recently enough or often enough for the veterinary surgeon to have personal knowledge of the condition of the animal, or current health status of the herd or flock, to make a diagnosis and prescribe.
- e) The veterinary surgeon must maintain clinical records of that herd/flock/individual

What amounts to 'recent enough' must be a matter for the professional judgement of the veterinary surgeon in the individual case.